

APA California | Section Central Coast

2021 End of Year Report

Here is a quick snapshot at the APA Central Coast happenings of 2021!

Section Elections

In 2021 the Central Coast Section held its annual election which included a call for candidates (October 26 to November 16) and an online election of those candidates (November 17 to December 7), and ratification of the election results by the APA Central Coast Section's Board of Directors on December 7th. The positions included in the annual election and the elected individuals were:

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| ● Section Director | Rachel Raynor, AICP |
| ● San Luis Obispo Sub-Section Director | <i>Vacant - No Candidates</i> |
| ● Santa Barbara County Sub-Section Director | Tess Harris |
| ● Ventura County Sub-Section Director | Clay Downing) |
| ● Diversity, Equity, and Membership Officer | Lilly Rudolph, AICP |
| ● Social Media Officer | Brandi Cummings |
| ● Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer | <i>Vacant - No Candidates</i> |
| ● Legislative Officer | Amy Sinsheim |

Sponsorships

The Central Coast Section received sponsorships from eight local planning firms, totaling \$4,350.00. The sponsorships exceeded the Section's budgeted goals and we were appreciative of each sponsor's donation. The Section Board is still seeking a dedicated Fundraising and Sponsorship Board member to fill the newly-formed role.

Annual Awards Program

On April 15th, the Central Coast Section held a LIVE Zoom event for the Awards program. Eight Award of Excellence awards were awarded, as well as one Award of Merit. The event was hosted by our Awards and Events Officer, Hollee King Winegar, AICP, and it was "attended" by about 60 attendees. The awards were set up to keep people entertained throughout the event. After each award presentation, an APA, CEQA, or local section question was asked and the first one to know the answer received a \$25 gift card to the local business of their choosing. To top it off, due to a generous donation by Paul Wack, friend to Central Coast, we were able to reward a grand prize worth \$250 to anyone who had stayed for the entire event! For our event in 2022, we are doing an in-person, outdoor Awards Event in Santa Barbara on April 9, 2022.

Diversity, Equity, and Membership

The Central Coast Section continued to participate in State DEI officer meetings to collaborate on outreach and educational opportunities for our members. We created a webpage on our section website that includes links to DEI resources, including podcasts, readings, and videos.

Professional Development and Legislative

The Legislative Officer presented at the virtual Planning Academy along with Eric Phillips, the State APA legislative officer, on new state Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations along with other newer planning related changes to the law.

The Central Coast Section participated in the State Legislative Review Team during 2021 and followed the progress of the legislature in reviewing and ultimately passing and sending planning-related bills to the governor's desk. In July, a virtual legislative event was held via Zoom to update the membership on bills pending in the legislature and have a discussion about the potential impacts of those bills.

California Planning Foundation

The Central Coast Section continued to collaborate with the California Planning Foundation (CPF) to award a total of \$72,000 in scholarships to 40 outstanding planning students across the state. The scholarships were awarded at the APA California 2021 Virtual Conference. Three students attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo were recognized for their academic excellence, financial need, and commitment to the planning profession: Natalie Lai, Alex Lopez, and Vyshnavi Shetty. Congratulations!

More than ever, APA recognizes the need for new generations of diverse, talented planners. CPF has granted a \$3,000 Diversity in Planning scholarship for over a decade, and is currently in the process of fundraising to allocate an endowment for a second diversity scholarship.

Section Website and Membership Communications

The Central Coast Section recently launched a new website for members and the general public. The new website transitioned to a new web platform that allows better administration and provides a better graphic interface. The Section hired a design team who has worked with various professional organizations including various APA sections. The Section formed a website redesign sub-committee to go over various design ideas and restructure the information on the website. The team is currently working on a legislative page with the goal of launching that this year.

The Central Coast sent out an Eblast twice a month to the membership list of over 900 people. The Eblast contained pertinent information, events, articles on planning issues, and job openings submitted by members. Additionally one-off communications were sent out on specific topics like section elections, awards, and other events. These items were also shown on the website.

The Central Coast Section worked on increasing our social media presence through our four Channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn). Our LinkedIn Company page was established in May and we've amassed 114 followers to date. We gained followers across all our channels and are slowly increasing interactions with our postings. In addition to sharing information from our website and eblast, we've been working on sharing information from

related channels, such as AIA Santa Barbara and AEP, to ensure our membership is informed of all events taking place.

San Luis Obispo Subsection

In 2021, the San Luis Obispo Subsection hosted four virtual happy hours from February- May and three in-person happy hours in July, October, and November at Bang the Drum Brewery in San Luis Obispo. The virtual happy hours had low attendance (~5-10 participants each), but the in-person happy hours saw 20-30 attendees each. In Fall 2021, we also gained two new student representatives from Cal Poly, SLO, one each for undergrad and graduate students. Though 2021 closed with the departure of our Subsection Director, the regional connections renewed during the preceding happy hour events were a welcome reminder that the planning community in SLO County is vibrant.

Santa Barbara Subsection

The Santa Barbara Subsection held in person and virtual events during 2021. We held in-person happy hours for APA members monthly from July - December (on July 28th, September 15th, October 13th, November 18th, and December 9th). The September event occurred at the end of the CA APA conference as a local celebration of the conference, and the conference occurred from September 13-15. On October 28th, we held a Fall kickoff trivia night jointly with AEP via Zoom, and we had approximately five teams participate (~5 people/team). We held an in-person holiday party jointly with APA and AEP on December 9th, with approximately 30+ attendees.

The Santa Barbara subsection also assisted with the 2021 Planning Academy which began on February 17th and included 8 sessions. The Planning Academy sessions highlighted emerging and core topical areas in the planning profession such as environmental justice, affordable housing, climate action planning and adaptation, public space planning, emerging technology, and transportation planning. The Planning Academy had more than 320 people register for the event with at least 150 people attending each evening. APA Central Coast's Young and Emerging Planners group held "After Hours" events for Planning Academy sessions to debrief, network, and discuss the sessions.

Ventura Subsection

The Ventura County area continued to offer a diverse array of events in addition to Sectionwide events such as the Planning Academy and Awards events. Events offered in Ventura County in 2021 included:

Public Engagement Participation Seminar. In two sessions held on January 13 and 20, the Central Coast Section hosted a seminar titled "Public Engagement: The Vital Leadership Skill in Difficult Times" and facilitated by Pepperdine University's Davenport Institute. The two-session seminar included instruction and discussion related to best practices and principles in boosting public participation and engagement with local communities, tactics for post-COVID community engagement, and strategies for increasing dialogue with hard to reach and vulnerable communities. The event offered 4 CM credits for AICP maintenance.



Service Day with The Nature Conservancy. On June 19, planners rallied in the Santa Paula area for an outdoor, and socially distant service day in support of The Nature Conservancy's work along the Santa Clara River. Inspired by the passage of Ventura County's Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Overlay, which covers this event's location, the service day was organized as a trash clean-up at a nature preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy.

Summer Happy Hour with Special Guests. On July 22, APA welcomed friends and colleagues to an outdoor summer happy hour in Camarillo. As an added treat, attendees were invited to meet and speak with special guests and APA award winners Matt Mansi and Jordan Marshall of Aldersgate Investment Inc. Earlier in 2021, APA Central Coast awarded Aldersgate Investment Inc. and the City of Camarillo with an *Award of Excellence for Economic Planning and Development* for their work in creating The Mark in Camarillo.

Social Hike at Ventura Botanical Gardens. On October 10, members and friends were invited on a weekend hiking excursion to socialize and explore the Ventura Botanical Gardens (VGB). The VGB are a 109 acre world-class site with spectacular views of the California coastline, verdant agricultural vistas, the Channel Islands and Ojai's Topa Topa peak. Located in the City of Ventura, attendees were guided along trails by the VGB's lead architect and president of the VGB Board of Directors.



APA-AEP Holiday Mixer. On December 9, members and members-to-be were invited to join friends and colleagues for an in-person, outdoor holiday celebration to connect and reconnect as we celebrated successes from throughout 2021. The event was hosted jointly by APA Central Coast and AEP Channel Counties, offering members of both organizations an opportunity to network with one another.

Yours truly,

Rachel Raynor, AICP
APA Central Coast Section Director